



The highs and lows of a ten-year Challenge!

Happy birthday NDIS!



Thought of back in the 1970s Whitlam era but officially launched in 2013, the NDIS has come a long way. Not that it was smooth sailing for a

brand-new system, controversies seemed to be a constant companion, highlighted negatively by recent media reports and extreme scrutiny on a brilliant system doomed many times in a tug of war between political parties.

In a nutshell, the NDIS was designed as an insurance scheme for Australians with permanent disabilities and the NDIS is supposed to provide lifelong support. For service providers like Connections Plus (Respite Care Bega Valley) the change to NDIS presented huge challenges. The old days under ADHC (State) funding the focus was on the carer, whereas the NDIS system supports the person with a disability. Budgets are established by 'planners' who explore the goals of the individual participant and 'support coordinators' who arrange the delivery of services through service providers like us or individuals selected by the participant or carer.

Individual budgets can include monies for personal care, therapies, specialized equipment, accommodation (Supported Independent Living or SIL) or community inclusion events. The person with a disability is now able (encouraged) to shop around to find a suitable service supplier and suitable support workers.

Since the scheme's introduction many changes occurred at the top of the Organisation often with people not familiar with the sector, but in past years this has changed and now we also have people with a disability in positions of power.

In the meantime, the cost of the scheme has blown out due to a much higher number of participants entering the scheme than previously forecast by the NDIS and yes, as we all know, the system has been rorted by rogue traders and providers. There is no denying, to combat criminal behavior the systems management acted at times very slow, which created negative press reports and resistance to the system by people other than participants.

Now we can hope that the new 'broom at the top', NDIS Minister Bill Shorten, is able to rid the system of criminal activity and reassure the public that the system is a great investment to the future of all people with a disability.

My personal comment on NDIS: It's a great system, it just needs some serious fine-tuning to keep it as the world's best disability support scheme. And yes, I know the NDIS doesn't fit everyone, but most participants and their carers are pleased they're part of the scheme and in the meantime, we keep on fighting to get the people who fall through the cracks to possibly join up too.



THANK YOU!

To the Tura Beach Country Club staff for allowing us to use their function rooms regularly for our music & movement and special events. Our Wiggles Winter dance party was so much fun!

Thank you for allowing us to park our Big Red Car and Dance the day away!

If you enjoy music & dancing and think you would like to join us for our fortnightly Music & Movement sessions at the Tura Beach Country Club, please contact the Connections Plus office & talk to Louise or Annette.



Congratulations on your new arrival

Francie & Will, along with big sister Maisy and big brother Louis have welcomed their newest addition to the family!

Introducing Mr Arlen Murphy.

Born on the 1st of July 2024

Congratulations Francie and Family, we wish you all a love & fun filled adventure with Arlen.



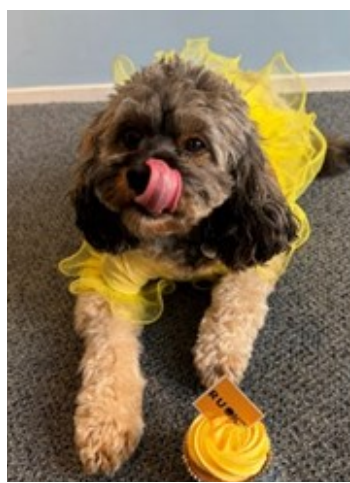
Monday 15th July was the anniversary of the loss of our dear colleague and friend Darren.

It was a timely opportunity to remind our Workers to ask each other, RU OK?

Cup-cakes were delivered to all our properties by Annette and her puppy Koko, both dressed for the occasion.

Our teams then organized their own commemorative morning or afternoon tea.

Information posters and conversation guides were also provided to each property.



1. Ask



2. Listen

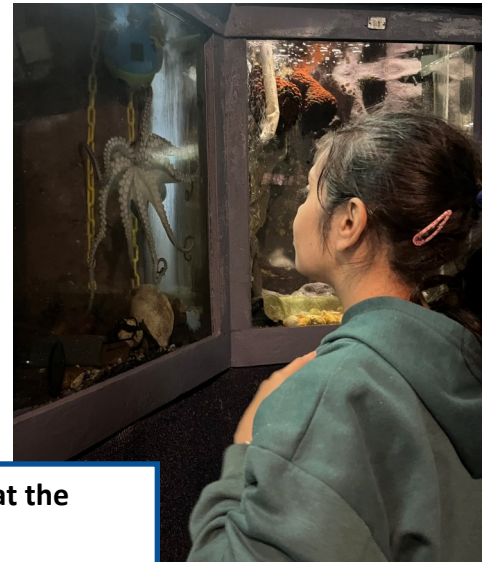


3. Encourage action



4. Check in

RU OK

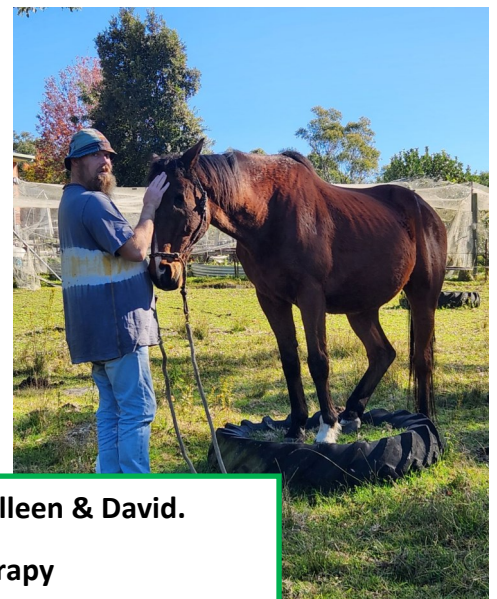


Jungarra enjoying the wonderful Sealife at the Merimbula Wharf & Aquarium.

Thanks for sharing these great snaps Jungarra!



Brent & Nik showing off their fishing skills at Spencer Park.



Beautiful sunny days enjoyed by Tom, Jordan, Colleen & David.

Birthday lunch outings and Equine Therapy



**Some amazing shots captured by (Creative Eye Photography) at the Nimmitabel Steampunk Festival of Ben, Loretta and Tash.
Thank you for sharing these with us they are fantastic!**



**Birthday celebrations have been in full swing.
Thank you all for sharing such great photos, so good to see you have all had fun celebrating.
Happy Birthday Dane, Andy & Jordan!!**

Your Voice, Our Future:
Have your say on youth
policy in NSW



Survey now open: We want to hear from young people!

A major new survey has been launched by the NSW Government in partnership with the Office for Regional Youth and the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People (ACYP) to engage with young people on issues that matter most to them.

The 'Your Voice, Our Future' survey is an opportunity for young people aged 14 to 24 to raise their voices, knowing that decision-makers will listen.

The survey will be used to inform decisions around the design of a new permanent voice for young people within the NSW Government.

We encourage young people across NSW to have their say and go into the drawer to win a monthly prize between now and December 2024.

- We will conduct one draw for the Competition every month from May 2024—December 2024 ('Monthly Draw')
- Prizes will be randomly drawn from ACYP's head office at 219-241 Cleveland Street, Redfern NSW 2012.
- One winner will selected from each Monthly Draw.
- Winners will select a prize from a list of age-appropriate e-gift cards to be determined by us. The value of the prize is approximately \$250.

<https://bit.ly/YourVoiceOurFuture-NSW>

Kind Regards

Department of
Regional NSW.

SICKNESS

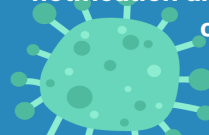


Help keep each other safe

As we chill our way through mid-winter, we have noticed a significant number of cold/flu like illnesses around this year, amongst our Clients and Support Workers.

Except in emergencies, and/or through specific liaison with our office, we do not provide support to Clients who are sick. When you present with symptoms, you may be contagious, which poses a risk to our Support Workers who work with other vulnerable Clients. It then becomes a threat to their health, their other Clients' health, and their livelihood.

For this reason, we ask that our Clients and Support Workers alike, advise us of any illness as soon as possible, so that we can conduct a risk assessment and determine the best course of action. Prompt notification also assists in the avoidance of late cancellation charges.



COMMUNITY
GARDENS
AUSTRALIA

Community Gardens are places people go to grow fresh food, to learn, relax and make new friends.

If this sounds good to you and is something you would be interested in please let us know.

Connections Plus has a plot at the Pambula Community Garden and we are looking for people to come and join us in the wonderful experience that is gardening and making new friends.

If you would like to get involved or would like more information please contact the office on:

6495 3797

